taken no part in quelling the riots now tried to capitalize on the failure of the revolt. "Vigilantes" roamed the city, breaking into private apartments in search of suspects. Public opinion demanded drastic measures. There were rumors that four hundred had been killed during the riots.[3] The wrath of the citizens against the Bolsheviks as instigators of the riots was understandable. Lenin and some of his lieutenants disappeared behind the Finnish border. Trotsky was arrested.

On July 18 rumors circulated among the soldiers that officers planned to arrest the committeemen in regiments that had participated in the rioting. Soldiers were threatening to "get" the officers. I spent that night at the telephone in the Tauride Palace, talking with the representatives of the garrison. About 3:00 A.M. a young officer came in, straight from a secret meeting. "I betray no one . . . but they will provoke a massacre," he mumbled. He asked me to go with him to the meeting of the officers and try to reason with the ringleaders.

We drove to the barracks of the former Imperial Guard. The hall of the officers' mess was packed. There were uniforms of all the services. Senior officers sat behind a long table on a dais. A colonel was bitterly accusing the government of weakness and the Executive Committee of cajoling the Communists. I approached the chairman and asked for permission to attend the meeting as the representative of the All-Russian Executive Committee. The chairman looked at me as if I were a ghost and asked, "Who told you of this private conference?"

"That doesn't matter. What counts is that a representative of the Executive Committee asks admission to this meeting."

The chairman hesitated a moment, then rose, interrupted the colonel, and announced, "Gentlemen! There will be a change in our agenda. The chair recognizes the representative of the Executive Committee of the Soviets." Violent protests from part of the meeting were drowned out by applause. It looked as if many people in the hall were not unhappy about the "change in the agenda." Instead of giving a speech, I offered to answer questions.

The officers complained about the lack of discipline and accused the Soviets of undermining their authority. I reminded them of the March revolution. "There were no Soviets in those days," I said, "but where was your authority? Were you strong enough to stop the massacres?" Then came charges that the Executive Committee was weak: "Why haven't you taken any measures against mob violence?" "Why haven't you called on the Cossacks and military schools?" "Why don't you crush the Bolsheviks in the Kshessinskaya Palace?" I

[3] This figure seems exaggerated. As far as I know, the exact number of victims has never been established.